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241 fern and low bushes and the second planting never yields as good crops as the first. Because of this, the natives try to clear new land each season, going farther and farther from their villages. There is little effort to keep the fires within bounds and if the season is dry [361] large areas of uncut timber are often burned over. The result is a wholesale destruction of large timber and the final exhaustion of the lands about a village. When this occurs, the village must be moved to new territory but, curiously enough, the natives never gave land exhaustion as a reason for such movements. The village will move [791] on the advice of an *ombiasy* ("medicine-man"), who will assign some supernatural reason for the crop failures.

241 423 596 When the *tavy* is inconveniently far from the village, the people camp there, building small, temporary houses. Among the Menabe the members of each lineage formerly camped and worked together, as a protection from enemy raids. When a section of land was to be cleared and burned, the heads of families marked out sectors along its front and each family cleared back into the jungle as far as it thought necessary to provide food for the year. The families thus had strips of crop land of approximately equal width, but of a length proportionate to their industry. The crops were the absolute property of the family, but the land reverted to the lineage and was reapportioned at the next burning. At the present time, this method has largely lapsed, and families are holding and working their *tavy* independently.

241 Seed for rice and other crops is usually collected shortly after the harvest and kept in joints of bamboo, small cloth bags, etc. These are hung up in the dwelling, over the fireplace, so that the smoke will help to protect them from insects. Sometimes wood ashes are mixed with the seed for the same reason. In a few houses I found [513] soft bags of matting, stuffed with seed rice, in use as pillows. Seed beans are sometimes kept in peculiar baskets made in imitation of clusters of bean pods (Fig. 1, c, d).

241 789 As far as I could learn, no special importance is attached to the selection of seed. There are no seed gathering ceremonies, no charms are placed with the seed, and there is no attempt to increase its yield by magical means. Seeds are usually soaked in warm water before planting, but this is not a universal practice.

Apparently no rites to promote fertility are performed at planting time. This is rather curious in view of the wide occurrence of such rites in connection with Asiatic rice culture, but I am convinced that if they ever existed among the Tanala they have been forgotten.

426 even to his sons until he thinks he is about to die. Loans and other business transactions involving money are always made publicly, in the presence of witnesses, even when they are between members of the same lineage.

423 In discussing the Tanala ideas of property it is necessary to distinguish at the outset between land and property of all other sorts. To understand the native attitude toward land, the local conditions must be kept in mind. In pre-European times the popula- [36] tion was sparse and apparently almost static. The villages lay far apart, each one surrounded by a great stretch of uninhabited [433] forest. The natural supply of forest products and of land for pasture always exceeded the local needs. Moreover, the *tavy* method of agriculture required that the land be allowed to lie fallow for from five to ten years between plantings. Under such conditions there was little incentive for individual ownership.

423 In pre-European times the ultimate ownership of land was vested in the village. Each village owned a definite territory whose 621 limits were established at the time it was founded. The boundaries 596 were usually rivers, mountain ranges or other natural divisions. [721] The villages were jealous of their rights and serious trespass, such as pasturing cattle or cutting *tavy*, would result in war. Transfer of land between lineages of the same village was permissible and not uncommon, but its sale to outsiders was impossible without the consent of the council. Actually, it was so rare as to be almost unknown.

The ownership of land within the village stockade was vested in the various lineages, except for the *kianza* ("village square"), which was common property. Each lineage owned a ward, which was usually a segment extending from the *kianza* to the stockade (see The Village). If a lineage grew too large for its ward, all the members contributed to buy land from the adjoining lineages. When one or more families withdrew to form a new lineage, the ward was divided.

Among the Menabe, fallow land and virgin jungle were, for all practical purposes, held in common. A villager was entitled to place beehives, set traps and gather timber and forest products [233] on any land which was not in use. Cattle could also be pastured anywhere, those of the entire village usually being kept in a single herd. For agricultural purposes the land was, at least in theory, divided into sectors running from the village to the limits of its territory. Each sector lay in the same direction with regard to

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the village that a ward within the village occupied with relation to the *kianza* and was the property of the lineage occupying that ward. Actually, the outlines of these lineage holdings were irregular. Their limits were set by natural boundaries and there was an attempt to equalize their value. 621 423 596

At the time of making the *tany*, the lineage land was temporarily divided among the various families, but it reverted to the lineage as soon as the crop was harvested. Lineage land, or, more correctly, the right to use it for agricultural purposes, was sometimes sold to members of other lineages within the village. This was a last resort and was only considered justifiable when some member of the lineage had been enslaved and his ransom could not be raised otherwise. It seems that such sales were often considered rather as pledges for loans, for every lineage tried to keep its land intact and would go to great lengths to buy back any which had been sold. When a lineage seceded from a village, it forfeited its land rights and its former territory could be occupied by the other lineages without recompense to it. 621 596 425

Among the Menabe two new developments in land ownership have occurred in recent times. Due to the increasing value of forest products, the lineages now preempt for their members the right to gather honey, wax and raffia within their territories. There is also an increasing tendency toward individual ownership of land. This is correlated with the introduction of irrigated rice culture. The preparation of rice beds requires much labor and they must be kept in repair constantly. A family which builds a terrace system is felt to have established its individual right to the land and retains it as long as the terraces remain in use. If the land is allowed to lie fallow for any length of time, however, it reverts to the lineage. This development is so recent that, as yet, there seems to be no rule regarding the sale of rice beds to members of other lineages. 423 178 596 [243]

Among the Ikongo the rules regarding land ownership seem to be much the same as among the Menabe except that individual ownership of rice fields is much older and better established. Such fields are inherited within the family and the lineage has little or no right over them. [184]

All property other than land is individually owned. This extends even to the least important tools and utensils. Everything in the establishment, from the house down, belongs to some particular member of the family. These rights of ownership are recognized even between parent and child in spite of the great theoretical power 421 593

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She continues living with them and is supported by them. Barren 428
women return to their own families on the death of the husband.

The estate of a childless person is divided equally among the surviving brothers and sisters by the same mother. If none of these are living, it is divided among the brothers' children. The sisters' children, who will belong to other lineages, do not share in it. A woman's estate is divided equally among her children. A man's estate is divided into two or more equal shares, one for his children by each of his wives. Each share is then further subdivided according to the number of children.

Brothers and sisters inherit in equal portions except that daughters 428
rarely receive land if there are any sons. This is designed to keep 596
land in the lineage, for if inherited by a woman it would ultimately pass to her children and thus be lost. If a daughter has married within the village she is given the equivalent of her share of land in money or cattle. If she has married outside she forfeits her right to inherit land or its equivalent and usually receives less than her normal share of the other goods.

Among the Menabe, the estates of unmarried men and all other 428
childless individuals are divided as among the Ikongo. An only wife, or the first wife in a polygamous household, has an absolute right to one-third of her husband's estate, exclusive of property which he may have inherited after the marriage. This holds even if she is barren. The largest share of the residual estate, usually amounting to about one-half, goes to the eldest son, who becomes head of the family group on his father's death (see The Lineage). The rest is divided equally among the other sons and daughters except that women who have married outside the village receive a smaller share. A woman's estate is divided equally among her children unless she is the mother of the family's eldest son. If so, he receives the greater part of her estate as well as his father's.

Secondary wives in polygamous households cannot inherit from [595]
the husband. He usually provides for them by gifts before his death. Individual ownership of land is so recent in this group that there are, as yet, no fixed rules governing its inheritance. Most of it seems to be taken by the eldest son and it is rarely given to daughters.

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ment and money is never disbursed without a long argument. The husband keeps most of his belongings in the *Vady Be's* house and considers it his real home. 595 592

In spite of the separate housing for the wives and married sons, the Tanala family is well integrated. It is customary for the entire group to eat together in the house where the father is on that day and cooking is done in rotation. The wives aid each other in all their activities, look after each other's children, etc. There can be no doubt that polygyny does a great deal to lighten the labor of the women and they are quite as much in favor of it as the men.

The family is normally patrilocal, but among the Menabe a strong and rich family may insist that their women continue to live with them after marriage. In this case the husband comes to the wife's village or ward in the village, builds the new house there, and assists the men of her lineage in working their common land. Widows with children continue to live with their husband's family or lineage and if they remarry the new husband is usually compelled to come and live with them. This is to safeguard the children, who might otherwise be slighted or abused by their stepfather. Under the matrilocal arrangement the father has little authority in the family and the children feel more closely bound to their mother's lineage than to their father's. It is considered rather disgraceful for a man to consent to live with his wife's kin and ordinarily only one who is poor or of little account will do so. 591 [556]

THE LINEAGE

I have chosen this term to designate a relationship group which is very important in Tanala social and economic life. It is intermediate between the family proper and the larger units of village and gens. The lineage is composed of the recent descendants of one man and his wife or wives, tracing in the male line. Attached to it, but not altogether a part of it, are the wives of lineage members, children of lineage women whose marriages have been matrilocal and, in many cases, one or more families of hereditary slaves. 596

The lineage might be described as either an expanded family or an embryonic gens. The natives themselves take the former view and use the same term for it as for the family, but it is much larger than a family in the European sense, often numbering as many as seventy-five to one hundred persons. At the same time, it differs from a true gens in the closer blood relationship existing between members, its closer social and economic integration and its rather transitory nature.

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596 Thus, while the village and gens are permanent units, the lineages of which they are composed are constantly dissolving and changing, a given lineage rarely persisting more than four generations.

596 554 The lineage is a direct outgrowth of the family. It has already been said that married sons build their houses close to that of the father and that they and their children are under his control as long as he lives. If the brothers are friendly to each other, as is usually the case, they continue to live together after his death, keeping the family land holdings and cattle herd intact. The eldest son becomes the head of the group, in the father's place. He directs the common activities, settles internal disputes and acts as its representative in councils and minor sacrifices. His position is almost like that of the father and he is shown great respect by the other members. At the same time, he has no legal authority over his brothers or their children and must gain his ends by persuasion. As he usually receives more of the father's property than the younger sons, he is generally the richest member of the group and strengthens his position by gifts and loans to the rest. When he dies, his eldest son succeeds to the leadership and the group holds together until split by some serious internal dispute. The reason for such disputes is usually economic, but jealousy is also important in the third and fourth generations. A rich man who cannot succeed to the leadership of the lineage will often demand his share of the common property and found a new lineage.

The members of each lineage live together in a separate ward within the village. They herd their cattle together and help each other in making the tany ("fields for hill rice"). All contribute to the support of poor and old members and, at funerals, all are assessed according to their wealth. Individual property rights are fully recognized, but there is a good deal of informal communism. Within the limits set by good taste, any member may use the tools, etc., belonging to any other, even in his absence. Food is shared freely. [454] In many cases the members will deposit their money with the head of the lineage, who acts as a sort of banker.

Blood ties between members of the same lineage are felt to be almost as close as those between members of the same family. Men and women use the same terms of relationship for each other as for [582] actual brothers and sisters. Marriage within the lineage, although permitted in some cases, is generally frowned upon.

THE VILLAGE

621 361 Until very recent times, isolated dwellings have been unknown among the Tanala, due to the constant danger of attack. The village

769 could tell him anything and he concluded that they must be members
782 of *Zanahary laky's* (*Zanahary* the male's) family.

793 In the Zafindriantrova gens stone tables are employed for sacrifices at the sacred place, but all but the most important offerings are made in the dwelling of the village priest, or in that of the person responsible for the offering. The ox is killed to the east of the house and the meat and rice cooked on the regular fireplace. In the *serona* rite a mat is laid on the floor in the sacred northeast corner of the house, with a covering of Traveler's Palm leaves. Six piles of rice and meat are made on this in two rows, as on the altar. Southwest of this leaves are laid, but no mat, and a single pile is made for the *rakeo* and strange ghosts.

The sacrificer scrapes the *hazomanga* only three times, with the usual counting and invocation. He then addresses the spirits as follows: "Sambatsinana. Antsinanana fary razana. Mangaiky anao, *Zanahary; Zanahary lahy, Zanahary vavy*, Rangidina, Andrianantomoa, Madiovazankoho, Beerongerongo, Vorombetsivazana, Andrenofaisafa, Avia fahinofana. Mandrorongo amny tady volomena mipetraka amiby farafara vola." "Hail [or salute] to the-East. In the East there are many ancestors. You are being called *Zanahary male, Zanahary female*, etc. Come for we wish to offer you a sacrifice. Descend by the golden cord and sit upon the bed of silver." The reason of the sacrifice is then explained and the gods invited to eat. After a short pause the ancestors are called and allowed about twenty minutes to eat, after which the gods and ancestors are sent back together. The priest who was my informant for this gens had also made inquiries as to the nature of the gods, but could learn nothing.

782 In all the gentes the less important sacrifices are made by the
• 596 head of the family in the sacred northeast corner of the house. Most
769 of the gentes use a small hanging altar which is almost identical with the frames used for smoking fish (Fig. 3, c). This is covered with a mat and leaves, but usually only one pile of food is made. The head of the house invokes *Zanahary* and the ancestors simultaneously, repeating no individual names, and the whole procedure is rather informal. The frequency of small family sacrifices varies with the customs of the group and the piety of the individual. Many families make an offering at every meal, placing a few grains of rice on the altar or simply throwing a little of the food toward the east.

778 No rituals or eyewitness accounts of sacrifices among the Tanala
782 Ikongo were obtained. Apparently there are no village sacred places.

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304 hereditary and no special prestige attaches to it. The tools are a small knife (Fig. 1, 1), a flat piece of wood on which the cutting is done, and various herb remedies to stop the bleeding. The operation [757] is always performed in the cold season, as wounds heal more readily at that time. Apparently infection is rare and I never heard of death or even serious complications following the operation.

304 852 596 Among the Tanala Ikongo circumcision is a family ceremony. The operation may be performed a few days after birth, but is usually delayed two to five years. The members of the family assemble in the *trano be* ("village assembly house"). The head of the lineage brings a pot of rum or *betsabetsa* ("honey beer") to be drunk after the ceremony. He opens the eastern door of the *trano be* and addresses a prayer to the ancestors, asking that there may not be much bleeding and that the wound may heal quickly. If the father is rich and wishes to honor the child he may kill an ox, but this is to provide meat for the feast, not as a sacrifice.

After the head of the lineage has prayed, the father places the child between the horns of the ox, if one has been killed, or holds him on his knees, facing forward. The *mpamora* ("circumciser") lays the child's penis on his cutting board, draws the foreskin as far forward as possible, and cuts it off with a single stroke. The wound is then washed with an astringent liquid made from the leaves of an unidentified bush. The foreskin is thrown on the roof of the house or, less frequently, is pressed into a soft banana and eaten by the father. The circumciser's fee is a cock and 1.20 francs in money. If an ox has been killed he receives the head in addition to his regular share of the meat. The ceremony ends in a feast with singing, dancing, and liberal drinking.

Among the Tanala Menabe most of the ceremonial accompaniments of circumcision have disappeared. The annual ceremony, to be described later, is no longer held. There are itinerant circumcisers who travel from village to village. Whenever they see a child who has not been circumcised they ask permission to perform the operation and do so without formality. Their regular fee is a cock and 0.60 franc in money.

852 304 Until about twenty years ago each village held an annual circumcision ceremony at which all children born during the preceding year were operated upon. The ceremony was announced some time in advance and people from smaller or dependent villages would bring in their children also, so that as many as thirty or forty might be circumcised at one time. Before a child could be circumcised it